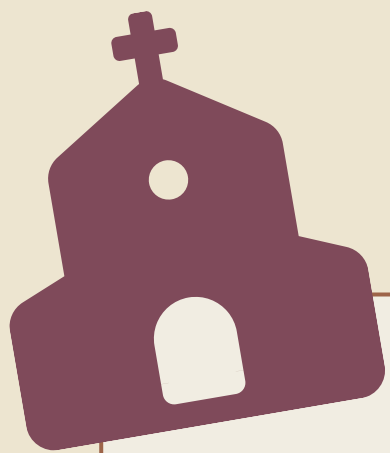




LENTEN VIDEO SERIES

SMALL GROUP GUIDE

for priests and lay ministers



THE SERIES

The series includes 8 brief Lent-themed videos, including an introduction and post-Paschal message.

REVIEW THE VIDEOS

Decide if you will use all or a portion of them, according to what best fits your parish needs.

AUDIO VISUALS

Equipment such as a computer and screen or smart TV is ideal for group sessions.

SCHEDULING

Consider meeting before or after Pre-Sanctified Liturgy, the Akathist, or perhaps following Divine Liturgy on Sundays.

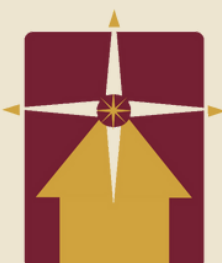
TIMING

15–60 minutes;
30 minutes is ideal.

AUDIENCE

This is a great resource for a small-group family ministry with families of children 5 years and up, and including grandparents!

VIDEOS CAN BE FOUND AT [HTTPS://BIT.LY/P2P-VIDEOSERIES](https://bit.ly/p2p-videoseries)





VIDEO ONE

OUR LENTEN JOURNEY

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"Lord," said Thomas, "We do not know where You are going, so how can we know the way?" Jesus answered, "I am the way and the truth and the life..."
– (John 14:5–6)

QUESTION #1

How do we find our way when we take a trip?

QUESTION #2

What do we bring with us on a trip?

QUESTION #3

How is a journey different from a pilgrimage, and why is it that we see Great Lent as a "pilgrimage"?

QUESTION #4

What will we bring with us on our pilgrimage to Pascha? Into our homes? Into our church family?

CLOSING LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM:

O Lord and Master of my life, take from me the spirit of sloth, faint-heartedness, lust of power, and idle talk. // But give rather the spirit of chastity, humility, patience, and love to Thy servant. // Yea, O Lord and King, grant me to see my own errors, and not to judge my brother and sister, for Thou art blessed, unto ages of ages. Amen.



VIDEO TWO

REPENTANCE

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"Now, therefore," says the Lord, "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning." So rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love." – Joel 2:12–13

QUESTION #1

We return to a place or person after we have left or turned away from them. What are some of the ways we turn away from God every day?

QUESTION #2

How does Confession help us to return to God?

QUESTION #3

What do you think of, and how do you feel about Confession?

QUESTION #4

In the video, Presvytera Melanie tells us that Confession is like our sins being burned and turning to ashes, or, a rose bush being pruned. When you think of Confession, what image comes to you?

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VIDEO THREE

PRAYER IN THE HOME

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it. – Proverbs 22:6

QUESTION #1

Do you have an area set apart in your home for prayer? What does it look like? What could you add to it to make it more inviting?

QUESTION #2

How does your family connect with Christ each day?

QUESTION #3

What can we all do in our homes during Great Lent to connect more to Christ through family prayer?

QUESTION #4

What special tools do we have during Great Lent to build on family prayer?

CLOSING LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM:

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PRAYER IN THE HOME

SPECIAL NOTES FOR PRIEST OR LAY MINISTER: FOR THIS SESSION THERE ARE A VARIETY OF TOOLS YOU CAN PROVIDE

- A laminated copy of the Prayer of St. Ephraim for each person or family and praying it together with prostrations
- A family censer – having censers, charcoal, and incense available for either purchase or as a “Lenten” gift from the church may be helpful
- A laminated copy of the hymn, “Lord of the Powers” with western notation for each family to take home. Perhaps you could teach that hymn during the session either by chanting yourself or using a digital version and having the families chant it together
- A template for an appropriate daily “Rule of Prayer” for a family during Great Lent with options for families with younger and older children



VIDEO FOUR

LENTEN SERVICES

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner...and everything is ready. Come to the...banquet." – Matthew 22:4

QUESTION #1

How are the Lenten services like a banquet? What services are on the banquet table?

QUESTION #2

What is "special" about each Lenten service?

QUESTION #3

What are you going to do this Lent to "taste and see" the different Lenten services as a family?

QUESTION #4

Why is it good to attend more services during Great Lent?

CLOSING LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM:

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LENTEN SERVICES

SPECIAL NOTES FOR PRIEST OR LAY MINISTER FOR THIS SESSION :

- Consider ways in which family members can be more engaged in Lenten worship—reading Psalms, chanting particular refrains/ short hymns/responses
- Set up the “banquet” on a table with liturgical items, copies of texts of portions of the services or hymns, icons, etc.



VIDEO FIVE

FASTING FROM FOOD

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"No one pours new wine into old wineskins. If they did, the wineskins would burst, the wine would spill, and the wineskins would be ruined. Instead, people pour new wine into new wineskins so that both are kept safe."

– Matthew 9:17

QUESTION #1

In your understanding, why do we fast from food?

QUESTION #2

Presvytera Melanie shared an experience she had with fasting as a young adult which led her to be more inclined to God's ways and less inclined to unholy ways of thinking. What experiences have you had with fasting?

QUESTION #3

What about fasting "doses"? How can we discern the appropriate level of fasting for ourselves and our family members?

CLOSING LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM:

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FASTING FROM VICES

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"And if your right hand causes you to sin, cut it off and cast it from you..."

—(Matthew 5:30)

QUESTION #1

What about watching TV, listening to certain music or spending time on social media can be spiritually destructive?

QUESTION #3

All or nothing? Too late? What can you do now; how much are you willing to give up practices that distract you from God?

Pick one thing and set a manageable goal for yourself.

QUESTION #2

Reading the Bible and other spiritual books and praying the Jesus prayer are ways in which we can replace destructive practices with remembrance of Christ. What other practices help us to keep our hearts and minds on Christ ?

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VIDEO SEVEN

ALMSGIVING

OPENING SCRIPTURE:

"Silver and gold I do not have, but what I do have I give you..." -(Acts 3:6)

QUESTION #1

The word almsgiving comes from the Greek word "ελεημοσινι" meaning "compassionate/merciful." How does learning this deeper meaning of the word change the way we see our call to give alms?

QUESTION #3

What are some of the spiritual gifts our church family has, and how might we share them with others in kind and generous ways?

QUESTION #2

In the story shared from the book of Acts, St Peter said to the man who was lame and begging for alms, "Silver and gold I do not have, but what I have I give you..." What do YOU have that you can share from your heart with others in kind and generous ways?

CLOSING LENTEN PRAYER OF ST. EPHREM:

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VIDEO EIGHT

THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

OPENING PRAYER:

"Come receive the light, from the never-setting light; and glorify Christ who has risen from the dead." –From the Orthodox Matins of the Resurrection

QUESTION #1

Presvytera Kerry gave some ideas of how we can keep the light of Christ alive for the next 40 days by singing the hymn "Christ is Risen." When can you set a time to sing this hymn together daily in your household?

QUESTION #2

How has each of you experienced the joy of Christ this Lent/Pascha?

QUESTION #3

In what specific way might each of you commit to share that joy, His light, with others for the next 40 days and beyond?

CLOSING PRAYER:

"Christ is risen from the dead, by death He has trampled down death, and on those in the tombs He has bestowed life." (Doxastikon of Great and Holy Pascha)